

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): A secretion suctioning device for an intubated or tracheostomized patient, which comprises:

- (a) a suctioning valve comprising:
  - (i) a main body defining an elongated internal chamber therein;
  - (ii) a hollow connection having a first end disposed outside the main body, and a second end disposed inside the main body and communicating with the internal chamber;
  - (iii) an internal channel having a first end communicating with the internal chamber, and a second end;
  - (iv) an on/off button;
  - (v) a selecting obstruction device disposed in the internal chamber and having an upper end attached to the on/off button, a lower end, and a passage opening therebetween, and wherein the selecting obstruction device is operable to be moved reversibly from a first position where the passage opening provides a communication between the connection and the internal channel to a second position where the selecting obstruction device blocks the communication between the connection and the internal channel; and

- (iv) a rim connector attached to the second end of the internal channel and disposed outside the main body;
- (b) a hollow interconnection component having a first end releasably attached to the rim connector, and a second end;
- (c) a hollow terminal having a first end, and a second end;
- (d) a hollow, elongated probe having a first end received within an inside wall of the interconnection component, and a second end slidably received within the terminal;
- (e) a sheathing for the probe and having a first end attached to the second end of the interconnection component, and a second end attached to the first end of the terminal;
- (f) a sphere valve having a first end releasably attached to the second end of the terminal, and a second end; and
- (g) a hollow patient/ventilator connection attached to the second end of the sphere value valve.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The device of claim 1, wherein the suctioning valve may be conveniently locked.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The device of claim 1, wherein the first end of the connection of the suctioning valve has a progressive staggering for receiving vacuum lines of varied diameters.

Claim 4 (canceled)

Claim 5 (currently amended): The device of claim 1, wherein the probe has a sleeve-like sleeve shaped tie rod.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The device of claim 1, wherein the probe has a graduation, and a marker is slidably mounted on the probe.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The device of claim 6, wherein the marker has a pair of opposed protuberances that engage the probe and provide a locking force.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The device of claim 1, wherein the terminal has an instillation route defined by a tubular projection radially extending from the terminal.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The device of claim 8, wherein the tubular projection has a diaphragm.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The device of claim 8, wherein the sphere valve has a casing, a sphere shaped element disposed in the casing and comprising a central section and two supplementary sections, and a handle connected to the central section, the central section having a transversal channel sized to receive the probe, and wherein the handle is operable to be turned reversibly from a first position where the transversal channel is aligned with the probe to open a passage for the probe toward the patient/ventilator connection to a second position where the transversal channel is not aligned with the probe to close the passage.

Claim 11 (canceled)

Claim 12 (previously presented): The device of claim 10, wherein the sphere valve has a color combination to indicate whether the sphere valve opens or closes the passage.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The device of claim 12, wherein the central section has a color that is different from that of the two supplementary sections.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The device of claim 13, wherein the central section is in green color, and the supplementary sections are in red color.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The device of claim 10, wherein the patient/ventilator connection has a hollow shift having a first end for communicating with a ventilating equipment to receive an air flow therefrom, and a second end, and wherein the patient/ventilator connection further has a connector attached to the second end of the hollow shift for receiving a patient's coupling tube.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The device of claim 15, wherein the hollow shift is disposed in an inclination angle with respect to the patient's coupling tube to help maintain the air flow in a non turbulent laminar manner.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The device of claim 16, wherein the patient/ventilator connection has a round wall sector for directing the air flow in a smooth and progressive manner.

Claim 18 (currently amended): The device of claim 15, wherein each of the first end of the hollow shift and the connector of the patient/ventilator connection has a sealing of o-ring type.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The device of claim 1, wherein the suctioning valve is of an anatomic and inclined shape.

Claims 20-24 (canceled)

Claim 25 (previously presented): The device of claim 1, wherein the first end of the interconnection component has at least one external sealing ring, and said first end of the interconnection component is received within an inside wall of the rim connector with at least one said external sealing ring in contact with the inside wall.

Claim 26 (currently amended): The device of claim 25, wherein the second end of the interconnection component has a ~~trunk-like~~ trunk-shaped configuration, and the first end of the

sheathing is placed around the ~~trunk-like~~ trunk shaped configuration and releasably attached to the ~~trunk-like~~ trunk shaped configuration by a first retention member.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The device of claim 26, wherein the interconnection component further has a median portion between the first end and second end, and the rim connector has an external thread, and wherein the device further has a first binding element which is operable to engage the median portion of the interconnection component and to be threaded onto the rim connector.

Claim 28 (currently amended): The device of claim 1, wherein the first end of the terminal has at least one external sealing ring, and the device further has a second binding element which has a ~~trunk-like~~ trunk shaped end and is operable to engage at least one said external sealing ring of the first end of the terminal, and wherein the second end of the sheathing is placed around the ~~trunk-like~~ trunk shaped end of the second binding element and releasably attached to the ~~trunk-like~~ trunk shaped configuration by a second retention member.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The device of claim 1, wherein the second end of the terminal is received within an inside wall of the first end of the sphere valve, and the first end of the sphere valve has an external thread, and wherein the device further has a third binding element which is operable to engage the terminal and to be threaded onto the first end of the sphere valve.